

Hamas Could Have Chosen Peace -- Instead, It Made Gaza Suffer

by [Dennis Ross \(/experts/dennis-ross\)](/experts/dennis-ross)

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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Hamas is incapable of changing, so Washington and its allies should work to discredit and disarm the group as one of several measures aimed at managing the conflict.

In the winter of 2005, Ziad Abu Amr, a Gaza representative in the Palestinian Legislative Council, invited me to speak in Gaza City. As I entered the building for the event, I saw Mahmoud al-Zahar, one of the co-founders of Hamas. Before I could say anything, Ziad explained: “We decided to invite the opposition to hear you. We think it is important that they do so.”

I had not expected senior Hamas leaders to be there, but it didn't alter my main message. Israel was slated to withdraw from the Gaza Strip in several months, so I emphasized that this was a time of opportunity for Palestinians -- they should seize it. I told the audience of roughly 200 Gazans that this was a moment to promote Palestinian national aspirations. Unfortunately, we know the path Hamas chose...

[Read the full article on the *Washington Post* website. \(http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/hamas-could-have-chosen-peace-instead-it-made-gaza-suffer/2014/08/08/eefd2b48-1d83-11e4-82f9-2cd6fa8da5c4_story.html\)](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/hamas-could-have-chosen-peace-instead-it-made-gaza-suffer/2014/08/08/eefd2b48-1d83-11e4-82f9-2cd6fa8da5c4_story.html) ❖

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